

BASIC MARKETING IDEAS FOR IARCTC MEMBERS

By Jack Keogh

Four easy questions:

- Do you have a marketing plan for your Tomatis Center?
- Does your plan consist of sporadic marketing activities with no specific goal, with no logical sequence of steps and follow-up?
- Do you have a way to measure if the plan that you have is working or not?
- If you were asked the purpose of your marketing plan, would you say something vague like, "I try to get exposure," or "We try to get our name out there"?

Hope is not a plan!

“Hope” is a wonderful virtue – but it is not an action plan. It is not enough to hope that you “will publicize your centre” or that “this will help me get my name out there”.

If you want to attract new clients, you need to design and implement a step-by-step process in order to consistently and predictably convey the benefits of your services to your current clients and to your prospects. The problem may be that you may have many areas of professional expertise. But, more often than not in the Tomatis Sound Therapy profession, I suspect that marketing is not one of them!

A step-by-step plan that will deliver measurable results

I would like to suggest that all of us who believe in the Tomatis Method, need to have a marketing plan for our centers. Do not put off making your plan because you find it challenging! You have overcome many greater obstacles on your journey with Tomatis!

Why do I say this? As you know, I am not an expert in sound therapy – but I have had the opportunity, especially when we have met at the International Conventions, to ask many of you about your marketing plans. I think that a typical answer to my questions seemed to be: “At my center we get most of our clients from word-of-mouth. When I can, I do some networking. When I am invited I will give a talk. We have held some ‘open houses’. I have written a few articles.” Does this sound familiar to you?

One thing that I have learned is that successful marketing plans are not simple. Of course I saw the complex and extremely expensive marketing campaigns launched by the multinational corporations that I have worked for. However, when I set up my own (small) company, I knew that without a good plan I would never get any business. And I did not have a budget for marketing!

I read a lot about “guerilla marketing” and “public relations” as opposed to “marketing and advertising”. I found that I could inexpensively develop a multi-step process and I believed that if I executed it faithfully and persistently I could make it work.

Of course, I had to acquire some new skills and perhaps more importantly, believe in myself and in the services that my company offers.

How to double the number of your clients

Think for a moment how your life might change if you could implement your own plan, for your own center. Would it excite you to think that you could perhaps double the number of clients attending your programs? Do you believe that if you continue to do things the way that you do them now, you will continue to get the same results that you are getting now? Do you believe enough in the Tomatis Method and in your professional abilities to try a different approach?

What should your basic marketing plan include?

An effective, proven plan consists in the following seven steps. None of them are difficult, complicated or expensive.

Step 1. Define your target market.

You need to know specifically whom you are offering your service to. You should be able to picture your prospects as clearly as you picture your own family.

Here are some ideas for you to expand your reach. These are services currently being offered by some of your IARCTC colleagues.

- Attention related problems
- Specific learning disorders
- Autism
- All forms of handicaps
- Improvement of musical listening
- Voice Training (singing, speaking, public speaking)
- Speech therapy.
- Hearing disability
- Adoption
- Recovery from coma and post trauma rehabilitation
- Down’s Syndrome
- West’s Syndrome
- Asperger Syndrome
- Cerebral Palsy
- Sensory regulatory disorders
- Auditory processing
- Children at orphanages
- Support for parents of autistic children
- Stroke recovery
- Terminal illness
- Stress management
- Premature babies
- Language training
- Emotional problems
- Anxiety
- Increase Energy
- Communication
- Preparation for birth
- Personal Development

Consider too that the *new portable Solisten devices* offer you the opportunity to expand your reach beyond your Center! Think of all those people who could avail of your services but who find it difficult, if not impossible, to come in for a daily session. You can get some more ideas on using the simplest Solisten device [HERE](#).

Step 2. Describe your service precisely.

You need to show your prospects how they will achieve a consistent and desirable outcome by coming to your Center. Avoid being vague. It helps if you are extremely passionate about Tomatis, Listening Training and your desire to make money by serving others! Do some research, talk to other IARCTC Consultants, check out descriptions on the Internet. Then craft your own description of the services that you offer in a way that will engage your prospects and encourage them to ask you for more information. I mean sales oriented language! You need to have a well thought out answer – that you can give in about twenty seconds! – to the question” “What do you do?” Understand that the question really means” “Tell me what you can do *for me!*”

Step 3. Write your marketing message.

The message must be simple and promise clear and valuable outcomes. This is what you tell your target market about your defined service to get them interested and wanting to know more. You should be able to perfectly convey what you do in about 30 seconds, maximum. This is called an “elevator speech” - it is a short description of what you do, or the point you want to make, presented in the time it takes an elevator to go from the top floor to the first floor or vice versa. For instance, determine your niche market, what problem(s) do they have that you can help solve and what solution is the outcome? What makes you unique? What short story illustrates a successful outcome that you have produced? Practice repeating it in under 30 seconds!

Step 4. Create some basic marketing materials.

The purpose of these materials is to educate and persuade your prospects that it's worth exploring further. I find that you can save a lot of money by using e-mail newsletters and your web-site. You can make and print your own brochure quite cheaply using free templates and a good copy shop. Nowadays you can also include audio and/or video in your electronic messages.

Web-Site:

Do you have a web-site? It is difficult to imagine how you can be successful in attracting new clients if you do not have a web-site. It is easy and inexpensive to have your own site. With basic computer skills it is quite possible to design and publish your own basic site. For something more elaborate, you will probably need to hire a designer. This does not have to be expensive – I would not be surprised if one of your clients already knows a designer who would be willing to help you out! Check out some of these sites designed by your IARCTC colleagues.

- www.SolistenTraining.com
- www.tomatis.nl
- www.tomatiscolombia.com
- www.tomatis.no
- www.tomatis.at
- www.tomatis-toulon.com
- www.thedaviscenter.com
- www.soundededucation.com.au
- www.centretomatis.com
- www.tomatis-japan.com
- www.tomatis.com.ph

PLEASE NOTE: You must be able to UPDATE your website frequently – otherwise it will be ignored by the search engines.

IARCTC Membership Profile:

You should also link your site to the IARCTC web-site (www.TomatisAssociation.org) and you should link it to other members web-sites. This will help your site gain more visibility.

Of course, you should update your personal profile on www.TomatisAssociation.org – provide your contact information, including a phrase that describes what you do. A personal photograph will make your profile more personal and will help other members to remember and recognize you.

Step 5. Invite your prospects to communicate with you.

Once you have the interest and attention of prospects, they need to be invited to talk to you under favorable conditions to explore how you could help them produce those outcomes.

Step 6. Define how you convert your prospects into clients.

The conversion process can be a conversation that takes place with your qualified prospects who are ready to learn more and are open to explore working with you.

*Suppose, as a first step, you can give a talk to a parents group at a school. You tell them about the Tomatis Method and your Center. You distribute your Press Kit (see below). You **always** gather people's e-mails. You put them on the mailing list for your Newsletter. You follow up and you **always** include your website address. You write to thank the school psychologist who invited you.*

Then, you have to finish the process. Do you want to call them by phone? Suggest an open house at your Center? Send them testimonials from your satisfied clients? Ultimately, you must define a "closing conversation" that will

*convert your prospects into paying clients. In most instances, you have to **ask** for the clients business – this is a vital step that is frequently overlooked by Consultants. After all, we don't want to appear “pushy” or “tacky”!*

Step 7. Deliver excellence.

Once you have new clients, you need to deliver the services as promised, meeting or exceeding their expectations, which then leads to word-of-mouth business. Ask yourself:

- ✓ *Is your Center attractive?*
- ✓ *Is it well maintained?*
- ✓ *Is the atmosphere pleasant with soothing colors?*
- ✓ *Do you have some nice pictures?*
- ✓ *Do you bring fresh flowers for the reception area and your office?*
- ✓ *Do you play soft background music in your reception area to soothe and to mask the sound of private conversations?*
- ✓ *Do you have a standard pleasant greeting for your voice mail and for when you answer the telephone?*
- ✓ *Are your headphones and equipment in immaculate condition?*
- ✓ *Do you provide an antiseptic hand purifier?*
- ✓ *Have you thought of using some pleasant aromas to create a sense of relaxation?*
- ✓ *Does your staff dress professionally?*
- ✓ *Do you display your brochures, web-site address, upcoming events and etc. for your clients to see?*

Remember: Your Marketing Plan must be a unified process It is *Not* a series of events!

It is important to remember that all the steps that we have mentioned are a unified process. You cannot afford to skip any one. You must execute them all, competently and persistently, in order to be successful. You will need to adjust the steps for the particular situation at your Center. Trial and error will help you perfect your plan. And of course, you will constantly need to adapt: in our times, change seems to be the only constant. Embrace it and be flexible!

Perhaps you thought the plan would be more sophisticated? In our profession as Tomatis Consultants we are used to studying a lot and pondering all the possibilities. Perhaps the plan sounds *too* easy to be useful! I promise you, that all the steps are easy to do and that the *process*, together with your persistence, WILL deliver results.

Look at your current situation. How many of the steps are you already doing? You know, as well as I do, that Consultants are not necessarily good at marketing. Many of us do not think of these marketing “steps” as a process. We don't implement them and then we wonder why we do not attract more clients, expanding our business.

Take a look at your competitors – or perhaps colleagues – who *do* implement a marketing plan. They do expand their business. They many even be attracting *your* prospects!

Don't let the process of how to attract new clients remain a mystery for you. It is something you can learn and it is much easier than you think! I suggest you discuss this with your fellow IARCTC members – visit the IARCTC web-site, contribute and subscribe to the blogs. Join the IARCTC Google Group. Reach out and ask for help!

We are going through difficult economic times. A difficult economy creates stress and anxiety. It also creates *opportunity!* There are many executives who are losing their jobs. Just think how you may be able to help them and their families to get through these difficult moments by creative applications of the Tomatis Method! Your Center can be an oasis of healing and of hope. For those who cannot or may not want to come to your Center you now can leverage the Solisten products – indeed with the new connector and amplifier you can attend a group of up to five people with a Solisten TC (“Solisten Group”).

Perhaps with the *new* Solisten® device and programs you could extend your reach to those clients and “prospects” who could benefit from a “modified” Tomatis program? No doubt when you get them involved, you will have action steps in your Marketing Plan, to follow up and to bring them in for the full benefits that you can offer in the Center.

If you do not reach them, perhaps one of your non-IARCTC competitors will. I would rather see YOU getting the new business in a Center where you adhere to and support the standards of practice and to the ethical codes of IARCTC! So, get your self a few sheets of paper and something to write with and begin to elaborate your basic marketing plan for your Tomatis Center TODAY.

*You should gather your materials into a **Press Kit** – an attractive, organized folder with the basic materials to explain what you do.*

For instance when you attend a convention or plan on giving a talk here is something you can do:

*Write and send out a **short press release**, to your local media about your attendance at the event! Here is an example of what your Press Release could look like. I will use the last IARCTC International Convention in Dublin as subject matter:*

Press Kit

NEW SOUND THERAPY TECHNOLOGY DESIGNED FOR ACCESSIBILITY, AFFORDABILITY AND EASE OF USE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Consultant Participates In International Tomatis Convention

YOUR CITY, STATE, DATE - For those that attended the International Association of Certified and Registered Tomatis Consultants 2009 International Convention in Dublin Ireland, the possibilities of the future became very clear. “Sound therapy is changing, and not only does the Tomatis Method play an essential role in the future of sound therapy it is also serving as a an expanding catalyst for this change” said **YOUR NAME**.

The gathering of international Tomatis professionals in Dublin, Ireland reflects the continuing growth of the Tomatis Method, with over XXX centers around the world. The attendees discussed the applications of the Method, including breakthrough programs for dyslexia, personal development, attention deficit and hyperactivity, anxiety, autism and many more. YOUR NAME advanced his/her individual skills and networked with his/her peers on all aspects of applied sound therapy, discussing how it provides a unique service to the local community. “IARCTC is the association of trained Tomatis professionals who adhere to the standards of practice and to the ethical codes elaborated by the Association (www.TomatisAssociation.org)”, said **YOUR NAME**

The Annual Membership Meeting held during the Convention also marked the election of a new IARCTC Board of Directors and a spirited exchange of opinions from the international delegates eager to expand the worldwide reach of the Tomatis Method.

“One highlight of the Convention was the release of new, approved Tomatis equipment called ‘The Solisten® Training Program’ which will lead the field of sound training into a new era of digital equipment and programming”, said **YOUR NAME**. “The new device provides the well known Tomatis Effect for my clients to use at home, at work, at school and on the road”.

END

If your would like more information about the Tomatis Method or to schedule an interview with **YOUR NAME**, please call 555 555 5555 or e-mail XXX@YYY.com

Tips For Submitting A Press Release To Your Local Media

Journalists want a story NOT an advertisement.

Newspapers exist to provide readers with interesting stories. Public relations is about giving the journalist what he or she wants, while getting free exposure for your center. Make your story exciting and relevant. "Mr. Smith, so many children in our community suffer from attention deficit and emotional disorders. I run a local Tomatis Center where we are achieving quite amazing results with a non-invasive therapy that does not use drugs."

Plan your call around journalists deadlines.

Most papers are morning editions. Do not call journalists' after 2 p.m. local time; that is when they are working on deadlines. The best time to call: 10 a.m. to noon local time.

Don't start "selling" right away!

If you get the journalist on the phone, start by saying something like, "Hello Mr. Smith, my name is John Doe and I have a story suggestion you might find interesting. Is this a good time for you?" Your courtesy will be greatly appreciated by the journalist...which can only help your chances.

Don't read from a script! Practice what you want to say so that it is brief, to the point, natural and spontaneous.

It is OK to leave message on the voice mail.

It's OK to leave your story to the reporter's voice mail. Keep it very short and end the message with your phone number (speak clearly!). If you don't hear back, try again until you get the actual reporter or editor on the phone.

Don't call to check if they got your release.

Journalists hate this. If you really want to get a story in your paper, call first to tell your story and then follow up with your release, photos, etc.

Follow up immediately.

If the journalist is interested, he will ask for more information. Be sure you have a press kit (including news release and photo) ready to send. Send it out via priority mail, and write "Requested Information" below the address.

Call again.

Now it's appropriate to call to see if the journalist has received your material. Ask if he has had the opportunity to look through it, and then, ask what he thinks. If he likes what he sees, you are going to get some very valuable free publicity.